

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

R. E. WOODRUFF

Florida Dept. Agr., Div. Plant Industry,
P. O. Box 1269, Gainesville, FL 32602

After 5 years of editing *The Coleopterists Bulletin*, I have tendered my resignation following this issue. I have considered writing an editorial numerous times during this period, but there were always too many papers, too many deadlines, and always the next issue for which I could write it. Following a personal commitment to keep the editor's job no longer than 5 years, this last issue makes it now or never.

Rather than take up precious time (evening) at the Coleopterists Society meeting in New Orleans (1 Dec. 1975), I forewarned the members present of this editorial in lieu of a lengthy editor's report. This was done partially because only a small percentage of our membership can attend such meetings, and also because it is not an easy report to give or write.

I have mixed emotions about resigning. There have been many enjoyable aspects—the academic challenge, the satisfaction of seeing the journal grow and hopefully improve, and the many friends (mostly) made during the handling of 151 different author's articles. There have also been many frustrations because of the time consuming nature of the job and the resultant neglect of personal correspondence and research. If the membership feels as rewarded as I, then I will be repaid and look forward to resuming some semblance of normalcy and order in my office and home, with a renewed vigor for beetle work again.

I initially accepted this job through the able coercion of Dr. Ross H. Arnett, Jr., the founder of *The Coleopterists Bulletin* (30 years ago), and who personally kept it going for many years at the sacrifice of his own resources (time, energy, and money). When I began this job I had his expertise close at hand to rely upon, and many decisions were based on his sound advice and counsel. I previously had only 2 years editorial experience as Associate Editor of *The Florida Entomologist*. This was also a crucial time because *The Coleopterists Bulletin* was still being published by Purdue University and had not been formally transferred to the Coleopterists Society, pending financial considerations.

It was therefore with great trepidation that I accepted the editor's job and proceeded with the first issue of 1971. It was not until late March that the final transfer was made, so we were proud to be able to mail it on March 31. I have tried to make the publishing schedule of utmost priority, and with 2 exceptions, have mailed before the end of the month for which it was due.

During these 5 years I have made many decisions, some of which related directly to this time schedule. Most of these were judgment decisions, and I hope most resulted in a better journal. As we all know from watching the referee's judgment calls during TV football, they are not always correct as shown on the instant replays. I hope those judgment errors I have made were minimal and are forgiven by those affected or offended.

Many changes have also transpired during the last 5 years, some of which directly affect the format, appearance, and overall production of the *Bulletin*. Some of these are of little interest to the membership, but I would like to mention a few that are not general knowledge. I believe there are many authors, not just graduate students and amateurs, who know little or nothing about the "magical process" between manuscript and finished printed product.

Printing has undergone phenomenal changes, and many decisions relate to these changes. The first issue of 1971 was "set in hot type" which was then used to produce a proof, which was photographed, and an offset plate made for final printing. Currently all our type is punched on a tape, the operator viewing or proofing an image of the last few lines as it is printed out on a TV-like screen, corrections being easily made at this time. The finished tape is then used to "tell" a computer, with discs of various type sizes and styles, what and how to print-out a justified version. This is the

basis for a xeroxed galley, the original being fixed photographically and stored until all corrections are made and then it is photographed for the offset plate. The advent of high quality offset printing has greatly improved the speed and versatility of the printed product.

Because of paper sizes and printing efficiency, journals of our size are usually printed in 8 or 16 page "signatures". This requires that the total number of pages be divisible by 8 or 16. Thus each issue must be pieced together as a jig-saw puzzle. It costs little more to print a page full of type than one with only a few lines. This is the reason for short articles and fillers appearing at the end of other articles. For instance, as a result of starting major articles on a right hand page, an article of 2.25 pages requires 1.75 pages as fillers, a fact not known in galley, but only after a "dummy" is made for page make-up.

It is now possible, with minor adjustments and minimal cost, to take an article which was originally set in 9 point type on 10 point spacing and have the computer re-set it a different size or spacing (e.g., 8 on 8), so that more economical use of space can be made. This was done with the book review by Kistner that appeared in Vol. 29, No. 3, 1975, so that it would result in 2 rather than 2.5 pages.

I have kept detailed statistical records for the 5 years, only a few of which are thought to be of general interest. As of this writing, 272 manuscripts were received, of which 212 will be published with this issue. The number of pages has varied from the first issue of 1971 with 40 pages, to 88 pages, except for the current 148 page issue. The total printed pages is 1,229, with 4 pages per issue devoted to covers, leaving 1,149 text pages. The subscribers varied from 370 in 1971 to 650 at present. Mailing costs (under second class permit) have varied from \$7.89 (Mar., 1971) to \$20.62 (Sept., 1975). Printing costs varied from \$602 (700 copies, Mar., 1971) to \$1,734.60 (1100 copies, June, 1975), the current issue naturally is expected to exceed this.

One of the major contributions to the success of our journal is the high quality of printing and the cooperative nature of our printer—The Storter Printing Co., of Gainesville, Florida. I am especially indebted to Jim and Morris Storter and Pete Beckett, but their entire staff has contributed: Jack Jenkins (the best typesetter in the World!), Nell Slean, Francis Dekle, Bozena Brown, Betsy Haibach, Laura Cook and Margaret Stallings.

There are so many people to thank for assistance during these 5 years, I know I will inadvertently omit some, but I thank them as well as the following: my family (Evelyn, Cheri, and Kris) has been most patient and involved in all aspects of its production; the past 5 presidents, R. H. Arnett, G. E. Ball, E. C. Becker, J. H. Lawrence, and P. O. Ritcher; treasurers J. E. Lloyd and T. L. Erwin; secretaries T. Allen and R. D. Gordon; my own secretaries Irene Ayres and Pamela Zwierski; administrators of the Florida Dept. Agriculture, Div. of Plant Industry: H. L. Jones (Director), and H. A. Denmark (Chief Entomologist); Richard Fall of the Bio-Quip Co. and Gene Gerberg of American Biological Supply Co., for the most productive free advertising inside their catalog covers.

I also thank all the authors and contributors for their patience, understanding, and hopefully their forgiveness for delays, lack of correspondence, and errors of omission, commission, and judgment. An editor has one of the most engrossing, time consuming, frustrating, and thankless jobs in existence, but, along with the contributors, usually governs the direction, reputation, and success or failure of a scientific journal. I feel very fortunate in being able to turn over this job to a friend (at least till now), Dr. Donald Whitehead. I know *The Coleopterists Bulletin* is in good hands, and I hope the membership, authors in particular, will show him the same goodwill and understanding that I have enjoyed. I leave him my best wishes and a sobering quote from the *Capital Chemist*: "If you ever see an editor who pleases everybody, he will be neither sitting (n)or standing—there will be a lot of flowers around him."

